

Foreign Affairs: Chock Full O'Butts

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The U.S.A. and the U.S.S.R. moved to the brink of both war and peace this month and successively backed away from each. How near we may have come to disaster may never be known, but it was probably closer than we got to accord in Glassboro. Nor is it likely that such compromises as a possible nuclear proliferation ban will lead to harmony.

Soviet Presidium, which Kossygin made basically his decisions even before he met Johnson. Although Kossygin seems to have a possible way of carrying out the orders themselves, the orders themselves were not agreeable. To all intents and purposes these are the Middle East initiatives and let the Americans handle Southeast Asia.

Policy Direction

Position forces Moscow to move more in the direction of a colder war than of a warmer peace. We must contemplate the Glassboro episode in that light. The only thing to be hoped is that Kossygin and his delegation drew no false conclusions from their talks.

One cannot forget that the inaccurate impression Khrushchev

received of President Kennedy at Vienna in June 1961, when, coupled with Moscow's analysis of the Bay of Pigs expedition, encouraged the dreadful Cuban confrontation.

Now Kossygin hops off to Havana from New York en route home. One remembers — although circumstances are so obviously different — that the last Premier to take that trip, Algeria's Ben Bella, finally wound up in jail.

When Kossygin gets back to Moscow it is possible the Presidium may analyze the inadequacy of information that brought about such Soviet embarrassment in the Middle East. The U.S. State Department lagged in this same field, but Washington was saved by the very accurate forecasts of the C.I.A. Russia's trouble was perhaps that its diplomats and intelligence agents were virtually synonymous — and also wrong.

Six Russian envoys in Arab lands plus the Ambassador in Israel are identifiable at least as former professional agents of the two Soviet intelligence services, K.G.B. and G.R.U. Thus, Dimitri Pozhidayev, Moscow's Ambassador to Cairo until the eve of the Sinai campaign and obviously an important figure in calculations that pre-

ceded it, has been a K.G.B. officer since 1950.

Pozhidayev held many undercover posts and was once paymaster for the Italian Communist party. His successor in Egypt, jovial Sergei Vinogradov, former Ambassador to France and Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs, first became involved in intelligence operations during World War II.

Vasili Nikolayev, Ambassador in Baghdad, headed the K.G.B. establishment in Rumania four years. Mikhail Bodrov, Ambassador to Kuwait, was a K.G.B. colonel in Vienna. However, his special claim to fame was that he headed a K.G.B. section responsible for smuggling Czech arms and Jewish refugees to Palestine prior to the first Arab-Israeli War and was later envoy in Tel Aviv. There he was succeeded by Dmitri Chuvakin, ex-head of the K.G.B. network in Yugoslavia.

The Russian Ambassador in Yemen is Nikolai Sulitsky, for five years a K.G.B. officer in Lebanon. Anatoli Barakovsky, envoy in Syria, has been a K.G.B. agent since 1950. Pyotr Slyusarenko, Ambassador in Jordan, previously headed the G.R.U. establishment in Egypt. One might even point to Nikolai Fedorenko, Moscow's

chief delegate at U.N. and ringmaster of the Arab cotillion, whose hearty malevolence is a feature of Security Council sessions. He once headed the K.G.B.'s China section. Incidentally, almost half of Kossygin's sixty-man delegation here were attached in one or another way to Soviet intelligence.

It is only logical that this apparatus, which so clearly miscast the Middle East, should now be the target of Moscow's ire. Surely the Soviet diplomatic-intelligence network is chock full of butts for official displeasure.

Reassessment Indicated

In the light of this network's analytical errors, which brought Russia so abruptly to the Middle Eastern brink, one wonders whether Moscow's calculations do not also need re-examination with respect to Southeast Asia.

It isn't yet clear how much the Soviet regime, which seems more pragmatic than dogmatic, will learn from the recent near-disaster and whether it will avoid stimulating too much tension as it tries to recover prestige. If it wants rules for limiting explosions, it had better stress objective truth in its own assessments.